

American

NEWS & VIEWS

A Daily Newsletter from Public Affairs, American Embassy

September 8, 2011

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U.S., EU Join Forces to Stop Illegal Fishing

By Charlene Porter | Staff Writer

Washington – Top regulatory officials from the United States and the European Union signed an agreement September 7, pledging to escalate their efforts to stop illegal fishing.

Jane Lubchenco, administrator of the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and Maria Damanaki, E.U. commissioner for maritime affairs and fisheries, signed the pact to stop illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing because it deprives fishermen who abide by the rules of \$23 billion in seafood products each year.

“Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing is one of the most serious threats to American fishing jobs and fishing communities, as well as to the health of the world’s oceans,” Lubchenco said. “International cooperation across oceans will help us maintain a level playing field for our fishermen by strengthening enforcement and preventing illegal fishing.”

Making accurate estimates of an illegal activity is always difficult, but IUU fishing is thought to comprise 20 percent to 30 percent of the entire global catch. Damanaki said restraining this crime on the seas is urgent.

“Illegal fishing destroys fish stocks and biodiversity,” Damanaki said at a Washington press briefing with Lubchenco. “Illegal fishing disrupts markets with unfair competition. It chokes the circle of compliance that we try to establish, and it damages law-abiding fisherman. ... Illegal fishing is a criminal activity.”

Both officials emphasize it is a global problem that requires global cooperation. But the European Union and United States, as the world’s first and third-largest importers of seafood respectively, wield significant influence on the marketplace.

Lubchenco explained some of the enforcement steps that the parties will pursue under the agreement: “Identifying IUU vessels, denying them entry into ports, working with regional fishery-management organizations to address IUU fishing within each region that is managed by those who have signed regional fishery management agreements.”

A bill is pending in the U.S. Congress, Lubchenco said, that would give NOAA greater authority to go after illegal fishing activity committed by an international fleet. She expressed optimism about the bill’s passage.

Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for International

Fisheries Russell Smith said the United States has also signed an agreement that originated at the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization establishing an international code for conservation and management of ocean resources by fishing vessels.

The “Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing” was negotiated because of the concern about the depletion of global fish stocks due to overfishing, and lays out measures aimed to achieve sustainable use of ocean resources.

In Europe, Damanaki said, the EU has adopted new regulations that every fish product coming into markets needs to bear certification that the fish were caught in compliance with all regulations. Acting on information provided by U.S. surveillance, she said, the EU recently imposed a \$5 million fine on a Spanish ship that was caught violating international fishing restrictions.

“We have real weapons” to enforce these policies, she said, explaining that the ship’s owner paid the fine under threat that his ships would be barred from all EU ports.

Questioned about whether stronger enforcement of fishing regulations might lessen world food resources, both officials said the governments they represent are supporting and promoting expansion of aquaculture – fish farming – to meet a hungry world’s need for protein.

U.S. Calls India Bombing “Despicable and Cowardly Act”

By Stephen Kaufman | Staff Writer

Washington – The United States has condemned the bombing attack on the New Delhi High Court in India as cowardly and says it continues to stand with India in the face of global terrorism.

According to press reports, at least 11 people were killed September 7 when a bomb hidden inside a briefcase detonated outside the court soon after it opened to hear cases. An additional 76 people were injured, and Indian authorities reportedly have said they fear the death toll will rise.

Speaking to reporters in Washington September 7, State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland expressed “deepest sympathy” to the Indian people on behalf of the United States, and described the attack as a “despicable and cowardly act.”

“We offer our heartfelt condolences to the families and friends of these innocent victims, and once again note that India is demonstrating its bravery and resolve in the face of terrorism,” she said.

She added that Deputy Secretary of State William Burns was able to personally express U.S. sympathy and solidarity to India's new ambassador to Washington, Nirupama Rao, when he accepted Rao's credentials earlier in the day.

U.S. officials "stand ready to help" if the Indian government formally requests assistance in the wake of the bombing, Nuland said, adding that Indian officials are still evaluating the incident and what they might need.

Peter Burleigh, the U.S. chargé d'affaires in New Delhi, issued a statement September 7 condemning the bombing and offering condolences to the Indian people.

"Terrorism is a crime that affects us all. Bombings like today's demonstrate that our shared struggle continues against those who would commit such atrocities," Burleigh said.

He said the United States "remains shoulder to shoulder with India in the fight against terror," and it will provide "whatever assistance possible to help bring the perpetrators of this heinous crime to justice."

In Brief: Martin Luther King's Words Still Inspire Debate

On the Stone of Hope, the centerpiece of the new memorial to Martin Luther King Jr. in Washington, are the words, "I was a drum major for justice, peace and righteousness."

Those words, a paraphrase of a sermon King delivered in Atlanta on February 4, 1968, have sparked controversy.

In the sermon, King describes the human desire to seek greatness as "a kind of drum major instinct — a desire to be out front, a desire to lead the parade, a desire to be first."

King exhorts his listeners to harness the drum major instinct for good. "Keep feeling the need for being important," he said. "Keep feeling the need for being first. But I want you to be first in love. I want you to be first in moral excellence. I want you to be first in generosity."

King imagines his own funeral and says, "Yes, if you want to say that I was a drum major, say that I was a drum major for justice. Say that I was a drum major for peace. I was a drum major for righteousness. And all of the other shallow things will not matter."

The prominent African-American poet Maya Angelou has objected forcefully to the truncation of King's words. She told the *Washington Post* that the paraphrased version makes Martin Luther King appear arrogant. "He had no

arrogance at all," she said. "He had a humility that comes from deep inside. The 'if' clause that is left out is salient. Leaving it out changes the meaning completely."

Others defend the use of a paraphrase.

"If you're a young African-American child, to see an African-American person depicted this way has to change your life — no different than Obama being president," said Ethelbert Miller, author and director of the African American Studies Resource Center at Howard University in Washington. "I think that's more important than whether ... we got the quotes from a particular part of his lifespan."

Taylor Branch, author of a three-volume biography of King, said, "What really matters is how the people who visit [the memorial] feel when they leave, and anything else is really beside the point."

What is evident from this controversy is the power King's words still convey and the esteem in which they are held by many Americans.

"I'm glad they're focusing on language," said the poet Grace Cavalieri. "When was the last time we had a controversy over language? The fact that all eyes are on five sentences that were left out is a marvelous thing. Now everyone's going to go back and look at the original. Words matter. That's the reason of the pain of it for some people, but everyone is looking at words and language. He changed the world with language, right?"

(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov>)